



# Safe and Successful Physical Activity Tips

If you have a chronic health problem such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, or high blood pressure, ask your health care provider about what type and amount of physical activity is right for you.

- **Start slowly.** Include physical activity in your daily routine and gradually work up to a 30-minute goal to maintain health and manage your weight, or a 60-minute goal to achieve weight loss.
- **Set goals.** Set short-term and long-term goals and celebrate every success. Examples of beginner goals: use the stairs instead of the elevator; walk 15 minutes a day. Next goal: aim for 30 minutes of physical activity a day.
- **Track progress.** Keep an activity log to track your progress. Note when you worked out, what activity you did, how long you did the activity, and how you felt during your workout. Try an on-line activity tracker from the President's Challenge at: [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org)
- **Think variety.** Choose a variety of physical activities to help you meet your goals, such as walking your dog, parking farther from your destination, riding a bicycle or trying a strength training routine.
- **Be comfortable.** Wear comfortable shoes and clothes that are appropriate to the activity you will be doing.
- **Listen to your body.** Stop exercising and consult your health care provider if you experience chest discomfort or pain, dizziness, severe headache, or other unusual symptoms while you work out. If the pain does not go away, get medical help right away. If you are feeling fatigued or sick, take time off from your routine to rest. You can ease back into your program when you start feeling better.



- **Choose healthy foods.** Your health and weight depend on both your eating plan and your physical activity level.
- **Get support.** Encourage your family and friends to support you and join you in your activity plan. Form walking groups with co-workers, play with your children outside, or take a dance class with friends.

Regular physical activity will help you feel, move, and look better. Whether your goal is to achieve and maintain a healthy weight or to improve your health, becoming physically active is a step in the right direction. Take advantage of the health benefits of physical activity and make it a part of your life.

(Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases - NIDDK)

